

# deepening your encounter

**'Oh magnify the Lord with me;  
let us exalt his name together.'** Ps 34:3

Our calling as worship leaders is to magnify God; to seek to help people grasp something of the true grandeur and magnificence that is his.

If we are to do this effectively, we must have an increasing grasp of the character and nature of the Object of our worship: God himself.

Each of us is a theologian – we all have a concept of who God is. The question before us is: how big and biblical is this concept? Is Sam Storms right when he says

'If asked to describe God, what terms would you employ? I fear that many Christians are so deficient in their knowledge and experience of God that they'd portray him as a formless, passionless grey blob of abstract power.'

It's unfortunate if this is true of any Christian; it simply must not be true of those of us who seek to point others to God as we worship him. If we want to be effective in our leading, our lives must be characterised by an ever deepening relationally based knowledge of him.

## **Encouraging others to join us in worship**

If I were to say to you, 'My wife is wonderful.' That statement, although true, doesn't exactly give you much information, nor does it really invite you to join me in whole-hearted agreement. On the other hand, if I were to tell you that my wife is unbelievably patient with me in the time I devote to all my little projects; that she is sensitive and thoughtful enough to buy me meaningful little gifts or do loving things for me when I'm feeling tired or overwhelmed by circumstances. If I were to tell you that she is a fabulous mother who devotes huge amounts of energy into creating a loving, warm home for our little family. If I were to tell you she is an inspired cook who can look at a fridge that seems to have next to no ingredients and yet have the vision and ability to be able to rustle up a gourmet meal. If I were to say that she loves me enough to confront me with tender firmness if she thinks I'm being unwise or foolish (which is rather a lot). If I were to say that she has a smile that lights up her whole face and still captivates and delights me every time I see it. If I were to tell you these things, then when I say 'My wife is wonderful', you're more likely to be able to join me in admiration!

This is not a call for us to become academics, building up knowledge for knowledge's sake. Rather it's call to know him, as a child of the Father, as a servant of the King, as a co-heir with our Saviour of all the promises of God. It's the true purpose of all **theology** – that it would lead to **doxology**. That right knowing would result in right worship of the living God.

What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us. The history of mankind will probably show that ... no religion has ever been greater than its idea of God. Worship is pure or base as the worshipper entertains high or low thoughts of God. For this reason the gravest question before the Church is always God himself, and the most portentous fact about any man is not what he at a given time may say or do but what he in his deep heart conceives God to be like.

**AW Tozer**

encounter

# Pondering the beauty of God

Take some time and space with God. Meditate on his word. Meditate means to chew over; think of a dog growling contentedly as it chews on a bone; be unhurried; savour your time; ponder and pray. Let one thought lead to another and see where the journey with God takes you.

And why not write down what comes to mind, journaling your prayerful conversation with God. Or you may want to write a poem or some lyric snapshots inspired by what you read. Or you could sketch out some image or graffiti. The idea is to take some unhurried time getting to know the God we worship.

Here's a sample. We worship God for who he is and what he has done. This psalm reminds us of these things.

*God, you're majestic, you reign supreme, you rule above all other kings, you alone are Lord. You are the Most High, the One above whom there is none higher. None surpasses your authority.*

*God, your majesty is full of splendour. The brilliance of your majesty outshines the most awe-inspiring super-nova in the galaxy that you made and sustain.*

**Ps 145:5 On the glorious splendour of your majesty, and on your wondrous works, I will meditate**

*God, your majestic splendour is full of glory, full of weight, substance and significance. Your majestic glory is the defining authority, the overarching, supreme rule. It extends, undiluted, throughout the earth and heavens.*

*God, your works cause me to wonder. I marvel that such a majestic God would even consider me. I am amazed that you lavish me with love. I am stunned that I've been adopted into your family, made an heir with Jesus, chosen and dearly loved. I am left simply with wonder - why me, God? What have I done? I simply bow in adoration in the face of your wonderful works for me.*

On the pages that follow, there are some more verse to choose from. It's not a case of doing them all. It would be better to spend more unhurried time on fewer passages. Pick the ones that appeal to you. And go deepen your encounter with God.

**Great are the works of the Lord,  
studied by all who delight in them. (Ps 111:2)**

## Psalm 96:1-6

1 Oh sing to the LORD a new song;  
sing to the LORD, all the earth!

2 Sing to the LORD, bless his name;  
tell of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his glory among the nations,  
his marvellous works among all the  
peoples!

4 For great is the LORD, and greatly to be  
praised;  
he is to be feared above all gods.

5 For all the gods of the peoples are  
worthless idols,  
but the LORD made the heavens.

6 Splendour and majesty are before him;  
strength and beauty are in his sanctuary.

## Ps 29 Extracts & John 1 - The Word of God

Ps 29:2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name;  
worship the LORD in the splendour of holiness.

3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters;  
the God of glory thunders,  
the LORD, over many waters.

4 The voice of the LORD is powerful;  
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.

5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

7 The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;

9 and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"

Jn 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his  
dwelling among us. We have seen his glory,  
the glory of the One and Only, who came from  
the Father, full of grace and truth.

## Ps 95:1-7

1 Oh come, let us sing to the LORD;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of  
our salvation!

2 Let us come into his presence with  
thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with  
songs of praise!

3 For the LORD is a great God,  
and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains are his also.

5 The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.

6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down;  
let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker!

7 For he is our God,  
and we are the people of his pasture,  
and the sheep of his hand.